

## Graphic Novels for Tweens

Abadzis, Nick. **Laika**. First Second, 2007. 978-1596431010. 208 p. Gr. 7 & up. A fictionalized account of the life story of the dog Laika, the first living creature launched into outer space, aboard the USSR's Sputnik 2 in 1957. YALSA's 2008 Great Graphic Novels for Teens.

Avi. **City of Light, City of Dark**. Illus. by Brian Floca. Orchard, 1993. 0531070581. 192 p. Gr. 6 & up. A timeless science fiction tale of good vs. evil set in an altered version of Manhattan. \*op

Baker, Kyle. **Plastic Man: On the Lam!** DC Comics, 2005. 9781401203436. 144 p. Gr. 6 & up. A successful rejuvenation of Jack Cole's adventures of Plastic Man from the 1940's. Ridiculous characters and juxtaposition of superhero thrills and droll zaniness are enhanced by the technicolor illustrations.

Bendis, Brian Michael. **Ultimate Spider-Man: Power and Responsibility: Vol 1**. Bill Jemas. Marvel, 2002. 078510898X. Gr. 7 & up. Volume 1 in the Ultimate Spiderman Series. A reinterpretation of Spider-Man's origin, updated for today's tweens and teens.

Brennan, Michael. **Electric Girl: Vol 1**. AiT/PlanetLar, 2000. 09703555-05. 160 p. Gr. 6 & up. Virginia, the Electric Girl, can release electricity from her body at will. This collection of the first four comic issues features Virginia, her meddling invisible gremlin "friend" Oogleeoog, and her fearless dog Blammo.

Busiek, Kurt. **Astro City. Vol 1: Life in the Big City**. Wildstorm, 1999. 156389551X. 192 p. Gr. 7 & Up. This first volume looks at a day in the life of the Samaritan, the world's busiest super-hero, and other colorful citizens of Astro City.

Busiek, Kurt. **Marvels**. Illus. Alex Ross. Marvel, 2004. 0785100490. 248 p. Gr. 6 & up. A look at the evolution of the Marvels Universe and all the characters in it, told from the perspective of the common citizen, a newspaper photographer named Phil Sheldon.

Castellucci, Cecil. **The Plain Janes**. Jim Rugg. DC Comics, 2007. 9781401211158. Gr. 7 & up. In an effort to find her place in her new high school in suburbia, Jane forms the gang P.L.A.I.N. (People Loving Art In Neighborhoods) and engages in planning "art attacks." First in a planned series.

Delgado, Ricardo. **Age of Reptiles: Tribal Warfare**. Dark Horse Comics, 1996. 1404672834. Gr. 6 & up. This wordless graphic novel with brightly colored panels tell the story of a band of Deinonychus that steal a Tyrannosaurs egg to their downfall. Other title in series is **Age of Reptiles: The Hunt**. 1997 Eisner Award Winner. \*op

Geary, Rick. **Treasury of Victorian Murder: The Case of Madeleine Smith Vol. 8**. NBM Publishing, 2006. 9781561634675. 80 p. Gr. 7 & Up. The eighth volume in Geary's non-fiction series, this title is set in 19th-century Scotland and tells of the scandalous affair between an upper-class woman and a lower-class man that ended with his gruesome death. The pen-and-ink images artfully convey this gripping story and maps and diagrams bring the story to life. Other volumes in the series include **Jack the Ripper** and **The Murder of Abraham Lincoln**.

Jemas, Bill and Joe Quesada, Paul Jenkins. **Origin: The True Story of Wolverine.** Marvel, 2002. 078510965X. Gr. 6 & Up. An account of the childhood of the beloved and mysterious X-Men character, Wolverine. \*op

McCloud, Scott. **Understanding Comics.** HarperCollins, 1994. 006097625X. Gr. 7 & Up. In this important work, McCloud explains the details of how comics work: how they're composed, read, and understood. More than just a book about comics, this gets to the heart of how we deal with visual languages in general.

Miller, Frank. **Batman: The Dark Knight Returns.** DC Comics, 2002. 156389341X. 198 p. Gr. 8 & Up. Batman has not been seen in ten years, but crime and violence have continued in Gotham City, and Bruce Wayne can no longer silence the voice of his vigilante side aching to break free.

Miyazaki, Hayao. **Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind, Vol.1.** Viz Media, 2004. 1591164087. 136 p. Gr. 7 & Up. Nausicaä, a gentle but strong-willed, young princess, growing up in the Valley of the Wind, struggles to create peace between kingdoms torn apart by war, battling over the last of the world's precious natural resources. \*op

Takahaski, Rumiko. **Ranma ½. Vol. 1.** VIZ, 2003. 1569319626. 300 p. Gr. 7 & Up. A popular manga series about a young martial artist who turns into a girl every time he is splashed with cold water.

Takahashi, Kazuki. **Yu-gi-oh Duelist Vol. 1.** VIZ, 2005. 1591166144. 200 p. Gr. 7 & Up. A popular authentic manga (printed right to left) series about a mysterious and perhaps dangerous Duel Monsters tournament.

Takaya, Natsuki. **Fruits Basket Vol. 1.** Tokyopop, 2004. 1591826039. Gr. 7 & Up. In the vein of **Ranma 1/2**, this romantic manga series involves an untraditional family and derives its humor from the transformation of humans into animals. The illustration style is cartoonish and whimsical. Grade 8 and up

Tan, Shaun. **The Arrival.** Arthur Levine, 2006. 9780439895293. Gr. 7 & Up. In this wordless graphic novel, a man leaves his homeland and sets off for a new country, where he must build a new life for himself and his family. Sepia-toned panels and turn-of-the-last-century dress and architecture combined with fantastical images enhance the feeling of being alone in a new world.

Thompson, Craig. **Blankets.** Top Shelf Productions, 2003. 1891830430. Gr. 7 & Up. Thompson's autobiographical account of growing up in a religious family in rural Wisconsin. Black and white art conveys emotions well. Contains some explicit nudity. Winner of three 2004 Harvey awards. By the author of **Goodbye Chunky Rice.**

Ueda, Miwa. **Peach Girl Vol. 1.** Tokyopop, 2004. 1595321713. 168 p. Gr. 7 & Up. Peach Girl is an authentic manga (printed right to left) following the story of teenaged Momo who experiences the social and romance angst all female teenagers can relate to. Won the 1999 Kodansha Manga Award for outstanding shojo (manga for girls) in Japan.

Vaughan, Brian. **Runaways: Vol. 1: Pride and Joy**. Marvel, 2004. 0785113797. Gr. 6 & Up. The story of six kids, aged 11 to 16, who discover that their parents are part of a villainous secret society called the Pride. After witnessing a Pride ritual involving human sacrifice, the kids decide to investigate, and they discover many secrets that their parents have been hiding.

Waid, Mark. **Kingdom Come**. DC Comics, 1997. 1563893304. 228 p. Gr. 7 & Up. This vividly-painted volume imagines a grim tomorrow for the greatest heroes of the DC Universe as they attempt to protect themselves and the citizens of tomorrow from the legion of brutal anti-heroes.

Waid, Mark. **Superman: Birthright: The Origin of the Man of Steel**. DC Comics, 2005. 1401202527. Gr. 7 & Up. Birthright retells the early chapters of Superman's story. Waid puts his own spin on the legend, rethinking nearly every aspect of the venerable character while remaining respectful of his established history.

Yang, Gene Luen. **American Born Chinese**. First Second, 2006. 9781596431522. 240 p. Gr. 7 & Up. With vibrant colors and visual panache, Yang focuses on three characters in tales that touch on facets of Chinese American life. A National Book Award finalist and the first graphic novel to win the Printz Award.

Please note: These graphic novels are recommended for purchase by public libraries serving youth. Books were selected based on quality of text, artwork and overall appeal. The titles and suggested age levels only serve as a guide; librarians are encouraged to determine what is best for their collections.

For questions or to schedule an exhibit of these books, contact:

Nikole Wolfe  
Children's & Youth Services Consultant, KY Dept. for Libraries & Archives  
[nikole.wolfe@ky.gov](mailto:nikole.wolfe@ky.gov) 502-564-8300 ext 266